km. A length of 652 km. in the State of Madhya Pradesh is proposed under North-South-East-West Corridors.

(c) A length of 10 km. in the Agro-Gwalior section of National Highway-3 is under implementation and another 33 km. in the same section will be taken up during 2001-2002.

(d) Work on all the projects on North-South and East-West Corridors passing through Madhya Pradesh is targeted to be completed by December, 2007.

Closure of Sugar Mills

†*597. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the closed/sick sugar mills in the country as on date, district-wise;

(b) whether Government have prepared any special package to restart the closed sugar mills and for rehabilitation and revival of the sick sugar mills in various States;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the sugar mill owners owe crores of rupees to the sugarcane growers; and

(e) if so, the details thereof, mill-wise and the details of the action taken so far by Government against such sugar mill owners?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR): (a) The district-wise list of sugar mills which have not worked during the season 2000-2001 is at Annexure. The district-wise list of sick sugar mills registered with the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruciton (BIFR) is at Annexure. [*See* Appendix 192, Annexure No. 35]

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† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(b) and (c) The sick sugar factories belonging to private and public sectors are covered under the provisions of the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985 (SICA). The cooperative sugar mills are covered under the Cooperative Societies Act of respective States. The State Governments are expected to prepare suitable rehabilitation schemes for the revival of sick cooperative sugar mills, with or without the participation of the financial institutions including the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC).

A proposal to amend the Sugar Development Fund Rules, 1983 in order to provide financial assistance at concessional rate of interest to potentially viable sick sugar mills is under consideration.

(d) and (e) As on 15th March, 2001, the total cane price payable for cane purchased during the season 2000-2001 was Rs. 8,193.77 crores against which an amount of Rs. 6596.01 crores had been paid, leaving a balance of Rs. 1597.76 crores. The mill-wise position of arrears in this regard is at Annexure-III. [*See* Appendix 192, Annexure No. 36]

According to available information, the total cane price arrears of 1999-2000 and earlier sugar seasons as on 15th March, 2001 were Rs. 245.60 crores.

The Central Government has been writing to the State Governments to take steps to liquidate the arrears of cane price payable to the farmers. The Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966, has also been amended so as to provide that the cane price arrears can be recovered as arrears of land revenue.

Purchase of Gas from Iran

*598. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of four rounds of discussions, including the third one held in February, 2001, with Iran with regard to the purchase of gas from that country;